

January 2020

Happy New Year!

I am so pleased to present the 10<sup>th</sup> issue of *NJ Studies: An Interdisciplinary Journal*. As you can see from our table of contents, it is another dynamic and thought-provoking issue, covering topics such as the environment; architecture; women's rights and gender relations; slavery, segregation, race, and inequality; epidemiology; and more. I am so grateful to the authors who have chosen to publish their important work with us, and I hope you enjoy reading it as much as I have.

Some of you might recall that in my last letter from the editor, in July, I shared a link to an anonymous survey that allowed readers to share feedback on the Journal. I am happy to say it was all quite positive. The constructive comment I saw most pertained to our layout. Why do our articles look like papers, instead of the traditional journal? Sure, it would be relatively easy for me to turn this:

***Beatrice Winser: Librarian, Museum Director,  
and Advocate for Women's Equality***

By Timothy J. Crist

DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.14713/njs.v5i1.200>

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*This paper draws on the extensive archival materials about Beatrice Winsor at the Newark Public Library, the Newark Museum of Art, and the New Jersey Historical Society to discuss her pioneering work with the Newark Public Library and her advocacy for women's rights in the first decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.*

In the spring of 1938, Althea Warren, the director of the Los Angeles Public Library, toured

John Cotton Dana has long been celebrated as the "man of genius" responsible for making the Newark Public Library one of the best in the country at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, and for launching the Newark Museum in 1909 with revolutionary ideas about the purpose and function of a museum.<sup>2</sup> However, Althea Warren recognized not just Dana's "original, creative, tireless genius," but Beatrice Winsor's as well. In a world where men usually headed libraries and women mostly staffed them, it perhaps took a woman to give appropriate credit to another pioneering woman in her field. |

In nearly all American towns and cities, the public library is perhaps the most important public space, available to all at no cost, regardless of the weather, on almost any day of the week. As in Newark, public libraries were usually put in place before museums or even parks or public playgrounds. They were often created by public referendum, as the Newark Public Library was in 1887 when the referendum received nearly unanimous support in an otherwise closely fought municipal election. Out of 24,275 ballots cast, only 331 voters were against establishing a free public library. Even in our information age, public libraries are treasured as a gathering place, a community space, and they retain widespread public support.<sup>3</sup>

In 1889, when Beatrice Winsor was hired as a library assistant before the Newark Public Library even opened to the public, librarians were still determining how best to serve the public and manage their operations. While men were almost invariably put in charge of public libraries, intelligent and idealistic women – at the time shut out of most other career opportunities – found libraries an immensely

...in Microsoft Word (although this would become much more complicated in articles that use images). But I'd ask that we stop and ask why the second look is the "gold standard" for journals. Didn't that "journal" look (which often means terribly small font, single spaced, sometimes with two columns per page) emerge primarily to save space/money when printing? Since we are all digital, why don't embrace it - and save our eyes?

Speaking of the internet: remember, we are on Facebook! So, if you are a user of that platform, we hope you will engage with our page to help us promote all of this fabulous scholarship. We may expand to other platforms in the future. This was another thing suggested in the survey; and it certainly makes sense. We just need to ensure someone has the time to devote to it!

As always, this issue would not have been possible without our blind peer reviewers. I regret that I cannot thank them by name, but they generously shared their time and talents to ensure that every article presented to you here represents the highest levels of scholarship. In many cases, our authors made important revisions to their work thanks to suggestions made by the anonymous reviewers. Many articles are still out for revisions, and I am so excited about the work in the pipeline that I hope to bring to you in future issues.

I am grateful to Sara Cureton, Richard Veit, and Maxine Lurie of the New Jersey Historical Commission for their invaluable support, along with Jeffery Triggs at our co-sponsor, Rutgers University Libraries.

Lastly, I would like to personally thank Monmouth University for supporting my participation in the *Journal*, specifically Dr. Chris DeRosa, Chair of the Department of History and Anthropology; and Dr. Kenneth Womack, Dean of the School of Humanities and Social Sciences.

We are currently accepting submissions on a rolling basis. Please be sure to adhere to the submission guidelines posted [here](#). Don't have a submission, but want to get involved? Email me to sign up as a peer reviewer. *NJ Studies* is truly a team effort!

Happy Reading!

v/r,

[Melissa Ziobro](#)

Editor

*New Jersey Studies: An Interdisciplinary Journal*